City of Seattle

Department of Construction and Inspections
Nathan Torgelson, Director

DESIGN REVIEW

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE WEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

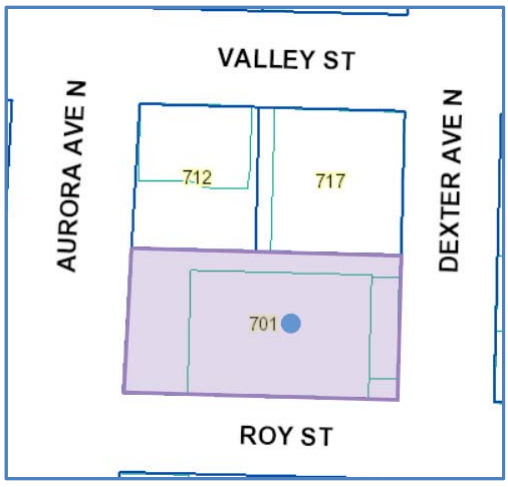
Project Number:	3026844
Address:	701 Dexter Ave N
Applicant:	Rico Quirindongo and Chris Bell of DLR Group
Date of Meeting:	Wednesday, April 26, 2017
Board Members Present:	Christine Harrington, Chair Patreese Martin Homero Nishiwaki Stephen Porter Brian Walters
SDCI Staff Present:	Magda Hogness

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Seattle Mixed (SM-SLU 175/85-280)

Nearby Zones: (North) SM-SLU 175/85-280
(South) SM-SLU 175/85-280
(East) SM-SLU 175/85-280
(West) Commercial (C1-65)

Lot Area: 27,127 sf



Current Development:
The site is occupied by a six story, reinforced concrete structure.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:
The project site is located in the South Lake Union neighborhood, which is characterized by the close proximity to Lake Union and a mixture of commercial, office and housing uses.

Substantial new development for this area includes a mixture of office, commercial, residential and mixed-use buildings that have been recently constructed or are under review. The project itself is an expansion of a six-story office building. Across Dexter Ave N to the east, a proposal for a two 10-story towers containing office uses is currently being reviewed under project 3026942. To the north is a seven-story residential building.

The site has street frontage on Dexter Ave N, Aurora Ave N, and Roy St. Dexter Avenue N is an established major bike route from the northern part of the city to downtown and also functions as a busy north south vehicular and transit corridor. Aurora Ave N, also known as State Route 99, is a heavily traveled road that separates the neighborhood from the Uptown Neighborhood to the west. The closest pedestrian crossing is located at Mercer St, one block to the south.

Access:
The subject property currently has vehicular access off Dexter Ave N, Aurora Ave N, and Roy St.

Environmentally Critical Areas:
None

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant is proposing a 40,000 sq. ft. addition to an existing six story building containing 60,000 sq. ft.

The design packet includes information presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at this website:
http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/aboutus/news/events/DesignReview/SearchPastReviews/default.aspx

The packet is also available to view in the file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at SDCI:

Mailing Address:	**Public Resource Center** 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000 P.O. Box 34019 Seattle, WA 98124-4019
Email:	PRC@seattle.gov

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE April 26, 2017

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Stressed the importance of the ground floor and streetscape experience.
- Noted the protected two-way bike lane on Dexter.
- Would like to see at least an 8' wide sidewalk as there will be a lot more pedestrians with the new construction in the area.
- Concerned with the amount the number of curb cuts; would prefer fewer curb cuts. Would like to see the curb cut on Dexter removed.
- Stressed the importance of lighting; the site is dark in wintertime.
- Concerned with entrance legibility. Would like to see wayfinding improved.
- Noted that the design goal for the new zoning in this area is to avoid lot line to line construction.
- Would like to see the design respond to pedestrians.
- Identified the site as a perceived gateway.
- Would like to see a balanced amount of lighting.

One purpose of the design review process is for the Board and City to receive comments from the public that help to identify feedback and concerns about the site and design concept, identify applicable citywide and neighborhood design guidelines of highest priority to the site, and explore conceptual design, siting alternatives and conceptual architectural design. Concerns with off-street parking, traffic and construction impacts are reviewed as part of the environmental review conducted by SDCI and are not part of design review.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the project number: http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance.

1. **Massing and Architectural Concept:** The Board discussed the strengths of the different massing options and strongly supported the cohesive pixelated concept of Option 2 and the two bar volumes shown in Option 3. The Board preferred a combined massing option which incorporates the fine granular texture of Option 2 into the bar volumes of Option 3, as the modified form has the best potential to create architectural presence and address the corner. The Board directed the applicant to proceed with this modified preferred option. (CS2-C-1, DC2)
    a. The majority of the Board approved of the asymmetrical massing along Dexter and recommended simplifying and clarifying the massing moves, similar to the top right image shown on page 54 of the packet. To simplify the volumes, the Board recommended removing the cant and resolving the edge condition of the

wrapping element and requested additional alternates for the next meeting. (CS2-C-1, DC2)

b. For the Aurora frontage, the Board agreed the erosion of Aurora corner was insufficient and recommended setting back and articulating the corner, similar to the Dexter corner. (CS2-C-1, DC2)
c. The Board acknowledged the applicant's statement that the setback along Aurora is in flux and may be decreased. The Board agreed that if the massing is pushed forward, at least 3' of planting should remain, and additional secondary elements should be incorporated to articulate the two volumes. While further developing the frontage, the Board recommended acknowledging the speed of passing vehicles in the design. (DC2)

2. **Architectural Concept, Materiality and Detailing:** The Board supported the muscularity of the original building and recommended adding to and layering screening in a way that expresses the existing building. (CS3-A1)
    a. For additional texture and articulation, the Board recommended incorporating sun shades or other secondary elements into the glazed portions of the bar volumes. (CS1-B-2, DC2-C)
    b. The Board agreed that one screening expression, for both the pedestrian level and the upper levels, would result in a stronger and more cohesive design. While refining the screening, the Board recommended thoughtfully considering the scale and detailing of this element. (DC2-B2, DC4-A)
    c. Related to the Roy façade, the Board acknowledged the constraints of the overhead power lines and supported the intent to retain the original glazing configuration. The Board also indicated interest in seeing a new window treatment. (DC2, DC4-A)

3. **Streetscape and Pedestrian Experience:** The Board strongly supported the ground floor retail space and small plaza and the gave guidance on the proposal's streetscape, edges and entries. (PL1-B, PL2, DC1-C4)
    a. The Board agreed with public comment about improving the legibility of the main entrance and recommended simplifying and clarifying the exterior of the lobby frontage by extending the upper gasket down. The Board also agreed that as much transparency as possible and potentially a canopy should be incorporated to demarcate the lobby. (CS2-B2, PL2-D)
    b. The Board acknowledged the significant amount of screening proposed along the ground floor and agreed it was critical to design and detail the screening in an artful way to address the pedestrian experience. (DC2-B2)
    c. Echoing public comment, the Board recognized Dexter as an established bike route and recommended bike and pedestrian amenities, lighting and adequate sidewalk width for the streetscape. (PL1-B, PL1-I-iii, PL4-B, DC4-C, DC4-D)
    d. The Board was concerned with the undefined character of the Aurora streetscape and recommended developing the scale and treatment of this edge similar to the Dexter frontage. The Board requested more detailed information for each streetscape for the Recommendation meeting. (PL1-B, PL2, DC1-C4)

4. **Arrangement of Uses and Vehicular Access:** The Board agreed with public comment that the curb cut impact on pedestrians should be limited, in particular along Dexter. The Board supported the proposed reduction of driveways and the applicant's intent to study limiting the existing curb cuts to one way in and one way out. The Board also recommended reducing the width of the driveways as much as possible and incorporating pedestrian cues, such as scoring or paving change to indicate the entries. Related to identifying the driveways, the Board supported wrapping the screening into each entry. (DC1-C-1, DC1-C-2, DC1-C-4, DC2-B2, DC4-A)

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) will be based on the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guidelines priorities and achieve a better overall project design than could be achieved without the departure(s). The Board's recommendation will be reserved until the final Board meeting.

At the time of the Early Design Guidance no departures were requested.

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines identified as Priority Guidelines are summarized below, while all guidelines remain applicable. For the full text please visit the Design Review website.

CONTEXT & SITE

CS1 Natural Systems and Site Features: Use natural systems/features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.

CS1-B Sunlight and Natural Ventilation

CS1-B-2. Daylight and Shading: Maximize daylight for interior and exterior spaces and minimize shading on adjacent sites through the placement and/or design of structures on site.

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:

CS1-I Responding To Site Characteristics

CS1-I-i. Sustainable Design: New development is encouraged to take advantage of site configuration to accomplish sustainability goals. The Board is generally willing to recommend departures from development standards if they are needed to achieve sustainable design. Refer to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design* (LEED) manual which provides additional information

CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.

CS2-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces

CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street: Identify opportunities for the project to make a strong connection to the street and public realm.

CS2-C Relationship to the Block

CS2-C-1. Corner Sites: Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points; both require careful detailing at the first three floors due to their high visibility from two or more streets and long distances.

CS3 Architectural Context and Character: Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.

CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes

CS3-A-1. Fitting Old and New Together: Create compatibility between new projects, and existing architectural context, including historic and modern designs, through building articulation, scale and proportion, roof forms, detailing, fenestration, and/or the use of complementary materials.

PUBLIC LIFE

PL1 Connectivity: Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.

PL1-B Walkways and Connections

PL1-B-1. Pedestrian Infrastructure: Connect on-site pedestrian walkways with existing public and private pedestrian infrastructure, thereby supporting pedestrian connections within and outside the project.

PL1-B-2. Pedestrian Volumes: Provide ample space for pedestrian flow and circulation, particularly in areas where there is already heavy pedestrian traffic or where the project is expected to add or attract pedestrians to the area.

PL1-B-3. Pedestrian Amenities: Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian oriented open spaces to enliven the area and attract interest and interaction with the site and building should be considered.

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:

PL1-I Human Activity

PL1-I-iii. Lighting: Design for a network of safe and well-lit connections to encourage human activity and link existing high activity areas.

PL2 Walkability: Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.

PL2-B Safety and Security

PL2-B-1. Eyes on the Street: Create a safe environment by providing lines of sight and encouraging natural surveillance.

PL2-B-2. Lighting for Safety: Provide lighting at sufficient lumen intensities and scales, including pathway illumination, pedestrian and entry lighting, and/or security lights.

PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency: Ensure transparency of street-level uses (for uses such as nonresidential uses or residential lobbies), where appropriate, by keeping views open into spaces behind walls or plantings, at corners, or along narrow passageways.

PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.

PL3-A Entries

PL3-A-4. Ensemble of Elements: Design the entry as a collection of coordinated elements including the door(s), overhead features, ground surface, landscaping, lighting, and other features.

PL3-C Retail Edges

PL3-C-2. Visibility: Maximize visibility into the building interior and merchandise displays. Consider fully operational glazed wall-sized doors that can be completely opened to the street, increased height in lobbies, and/or special lighting for displays.

PL3-C-3. Ancillary Activities: Allow space for activities such as sidewalk vending, seating, and restaurant dining to occur. Consider setting structures back from the street or incorporating space in the project design into which retail uses can extend.

PL4 Active Transportation: Incorporate design features that facilitate active forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and use of transit.

PL4-B Planning Ahead for Bicyclists

PL4-B-1. Early Planning: Consider existing and future bicycle traffic to and through the site early in the process so that access and connections are integrated into the project along with other modes of travel.

PL4-B-2. Bike Facilities: Facilities such as bike racks and storage, bike share stations, shower facilities and lockers for bicyclists should be located to maximize convenience, security, and safety.

PL4-B-3. Bike Connections: Facilitate connections to bicycle trails and infrastructure around and beyond the project.

DESIGN CONCEPT

DC1 Project Uses and Activities: Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.

DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses

DC1-A-1. Visibility: Locate uses and services frequently used by the public in visible or prominent areas, such as at entries or along the street front.

DC1-B Vehicular Access and Circulation

DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design: Choose locations for vehicular access, service uses, and delivery areas that minimize conflict between vehicles and non-motorists wherever possible. Emphasize use of the sidewalk for pedestrians, and create safe and attractive conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.

DC1-C Parking and Service Uses

DC1-C-2. Visual Impacts: Reduce the visual impacts of parking lots, parking structures, entrances, and related signs and equipment as much as possible.

DC1-C-4. Service Uses: Locate and design service entries, loading docks, and trash receptacles away from pedestrian areas or to a less visible portion of the site to reduce possible impacts of these facilities on building aesthetics and pedestrian circulation.

DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.

DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition

DC2-B-1. Façade Composition: Design all building facades—including alleys and visible roofs— considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all facades are attractive and well-proportioned.

DC2-B-2. Blank Walls: Avoid large blank walls along visible façades wherever possible. Where expanses of blank walls, retaining walls, or garage facades are unavoidable, include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians.

DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features

DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest: Add depth to facades where appropriate by incorporating balconies, canopies, awnings, decks, or other secondary elements into the façade design. Add detailing at the street level in order to create interest for the pedestrian and encourage active street life and window shopping (in retail areas).

DC2-C-2. Dual Purpose Elements: Consider architectural features that can be dual purpose— adding depth, texture, and scale as well as serving other project functions.

DC2-D Scale and Texture

DC2-D-2. Texture: Design the character of the building, as expressed in the form, scale, and materials, to strive for a fine-grained scale, or "texture," particularly at the street level and other areas where pedestrians predominate.

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:

DC2-I Architectural Concept and Consistency

DC2-I-i. Roofscape Design: Design the "fifth elevation" — the roofscape — in addition to the streetscape. As this area topographically is a valley, the roofs may be viewed from locations outside the neighborhood such as the freeway and Space Needle. Therefore, views from outside the area as well as from within the neighborhood should be considered, and roof-top elements should be organized to minimize view impacts from the freeway and elevated areas.

DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.

DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes

DC4-A-1. Exterior Finish Materials: Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.

DC4-A-2. Climate Appropriateness: Select durable and attractive materials that will age well in Seattle's climate, taking special care to detail corners, edges, and transitions.

DC4-B Signage

DC4-B-1. Scale and Character: Add interest to the streetscape with exterior signs and attachments that are appropriate in scale and character to the project and its environs.

DC4-B-2. Coordination with Project Design: Develop a signage plan within the context of architectural and open space concepts, and coordinate the details with façade design, lighting, and other project features to complement the project as a whole, in addition to the surrounding context.

DC4-C Lighting

DC4-C-1. Functions: Use lighting both to increase site safety in all locations used by pedestrians and to highlight architectural or landscape details and features such as entries, signs, canopies, plantings, and art.

DC4-C-2. Avoiding Glare: Design project lighting based upon the uses on and off site, taking care to provide illumination to serve building needs while avoiding off-site night glare and light pollution.

DC4-D Trees, Landscape, and Hardscape Materials

DC4-D-1. Choice of Plant Materials: Reinforce the overall architectural and open space design concepts through the selection of landscape materials.

DC4-D-2. Hardscape Materials: Use exterior courtyards, plazas, and other hard surfaced areas as an opportunity to add color, texture, and/or pattern and enliven public areas through the use of distinctive and durable paving materials. Use permeable materials wherever possible.

DC4-D-3. Long Range Planning: Select plants that upon maturity will be of appropriate size, scale, and shape to contribute to the site as intended.

DC4-D-4. Place Making: Create a landscape design that helps define spaces with significant elements such as trees.

RECOMMENDATIONS

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE meeting, the Board unanimously recommended moving forward to MUP application.